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the Dark

Sequel of a Strange Meeting In a Lofty Tower

By AGNES G. BROGAN 

Billie Van had been in a state of depression for days. Even the fellows at the club noticed it. Games which had heretofore been his delight now falled to amuse, while friendly raillery met with no response. As he strolled down Fifth avenue lost in gloomy med-Newburg, Ala,-"For more than a itation Billie was unaware of a young woman's presence at his side until she

> "Billie boy," asked the young woman, "whither goest thou in such an absent mood?"

Billie glowered at her for a momen without making a reply, then calmly possessed himself of her velvet clad arm. "I want to talk to you, Belle.

The girl glanced at him in quick displeasure. "If you are going to bring that old subject up again, Billie," she cried petulantly, "let me tell you right now it will be useless."

"Probably," the young man quietly answered. "Nevertheless I shall trouble you once more. It will be the last time. Are you still determined in your

She laughed softly. "Still determined in my purpose," she repeated, "of marrying the wealthy Mr. Nailor." "Can nothing on earth change you-

have you no heart?" Billie's voice rang out passionately. "No heart?" she lightly answered

How often have I told you except for "Then," said the young man delib-

erately, "I have also reached a decision. Would you like to have me tell you what that means?"

There was a tense earnestness in the question which caused Belle's face to flush with annoyance. "This is hardly the place for a discussion," she answered nervously, "unless you care to shout above the traffic."

Billie Van looked straight before him. Then his wandering gaze fell upon a white towered building whose gleaming balcony seemed as remote us distant from the crowded street as the very clouds above. Impulsively the young man raised his hand. "Let us go up there, Belle," he said. "It will take but a moment, and we shall be alone and undisturbed."

The girl laughed mockingly, "Are you quite crazy, Billie?" she exclaimed. His eyes sought hers compellingly. Almost roughly he drew her into the great stone entrance. "The question I wish to ask must be answered now, he said.

With a strange feeling of apprehension the young woman watched the tiny sinking light which heralded the ascent of the elevator. "Thirty, forty"- she counted the stories absently as the car flew up like a bird. Then Billie led her out to the parapet of the balconv.

"Well, Bille," she asked, "the decl-

He turned abruptly, as one startled. Grim lines deepened about his boyish mouth. "So money alone spells happiness for you. Belle?" She nodded curtly. "And a poor man's love counts for

"Nothing," she responded, and her red lips closed firmly. Billie Van laughed. It was a mirth-

ess laugh, which echoed eerily up in the silent tower. "This, then, is my derision," he said slowly, "for your happiness has been my one endeavor. I've had nothing else to live for, so why now worry longer?" He'bent lower over the parapet. "I tell you once more, Belle-I'm going to give up the everlasting struggle. I've really nothing to lose. After all"-Billie's voice trailed off dreamlly-"it's only a leap in the dark," he murmured, "only i leap in the dark." His companion drew back against

the wall with a sharp cry. "You are a coward, Billie Van." she said choking ly. "trying to make me responsible for this rash thing you would do. But I nm not concerned-do you hear? I have no belief in your threat, and I'm going down." There was a clicking sound as the door closed behind her.

"You are a bypocrite, old girl." Biltie muttered, "luring us on with false hopes, but I've done with your eternal promise. No more for me." Sadness settled in his brooding eyes. Billie removed his bat and fossed it to the floor, while the cool breeze fauned his forehend.

"I guess Belle was right," be told himself. "I am a coward-just a cow-

Billie Van never knew quite what happened next. He became suddenly aware of a pair of tight enfolding arms, and as he glanced down at his own encircled breadth Billie's aston ished gaze fell upon two small beruffied hands locked closely on his breast, "l'lease!" cried the girl breathlessly.

"Oh, pleasel" and could say no more: but, though the vibrant voice broke helplessly, the young, strong arms still held him in an almost vicelike grasp, "You must not do it," the trembling voice went on, and the girl emphasized her command with a little angry "You have quite lost your senses. Later, when you think this over, you will be ushamed-oh, so bitterly ashamed: I heard all you said

The Daily Telegram will give

back there in the shadow. No girl is quaintly sweet character made up for worth such a sinful sacrifice, and that a play, and Billie smiled involuntarily beartiess creature"- She into the wrinkled face.

Billie Van stood, staring dumbly, pened. Then she looked angular this unexpected encounter seemed to at her niece's companion.

have taken from blue power of thought. With sudden inspiration Billie Van in Nashville, in particular, he dressed in black broadcloth frock coat and and speech. He was vaguely considered to concern herself in my being arms. Up here among the stars half," he said; "to give me help in he seemed to be the object of a moment of need. Therefore, may I be his attire for thirty years, and for most well received as was the "Aeropiane strange confusing dream. But when showed to offer my card?"
Billie found that the girl was sobbing. The little old lady examin pressing ber little tear wet face against his sleeve, he awoke to sud-

den pity. "See here," he begged. "Don't do boldly, "that your niece is a teacher to smile. "I have troubles of my

"If you try to throw yourself over the parapet." the girl solemnly assured him, "you will take me with you, for

"You do not understand, my child." be was beginning when his deliverer shook her bead.

"Men have died," she quoted, "but not for love. This I cannot understand -how a well fed, well clad man like you could so utterly lose courage. If it were me"-the girl laughed tremulously, and her laughter rang like musical bells up to the lonely tower-"oh there might be an excuse for me. The thin suit I am wearing was never made for cold or wintry weather, while my gloves-well, my gloves have been sew ed up so often for holes in the lingers that I carry them now in pretense, and as for dining with regularity-it is remarkable how small an amount of food is necessary for the existence of the

With a sudden wrench Billie unclasp ed the protesting bands and held them in his own. "Do you mean to tell me, he asked jerkily, "that you are really as poor as that?"

"Just as poor." the girl answered cheerfully. "I merely state the fact to



HIS COMPANION DREW BACK AGAINST THE WALL WITH A SHARP CRY.

you that all about are those who might, with some reason, wish to quit such an unfeeling world. And yet we have no such wish." "You are not going?" Billie cried out

in unaccountable alarm

"I shall wait until I have your promise," she said.

"My promise?" Billie reiterated. The girl bowed seriously. "That you never consider again that horrible

A deep red crept from Billie Van's throat to the hair on his forehead, "I will go safely down to the street with

you whenever you wish," he replied.
"That is right," the girl encouraged and extended her hand. "From tonight on I shall believe in you, shall have no fear for you. Is there a mother to

"No mother," Billie answered grave ly. "If there was she would thank you for the spirit of bravery which prompted aid to a worthless stranger But I am not entirely selfish. May I know why the little cont must be so thin and the gloves sewed up at the fingers?" Billie's smile was very kind-

ly, and the girl finshed a bright re-

"Certainly," she answered, "for to be interested in another's woe is a good sign indeed. I am a country girl, as you might have guessed, adrift in New York in search of work. My chosen into a rose colored, impossible dream So we are becoming humble enough and hungry enough to accept almost any kind of honest tabor. If I were the only one to suffer it would not so much matter, but there is aunt, you see-Annt Behada, who has raised me and sacrificed for me all her life. Her ings of years, which your greedy city swallows in an alarming manner

rent is not now mentioned between The girl's laughter sounded again "They charge more for studies here," she said, "than they do at Wellman's

"You did not expect to run sician's shoulders. against the truth so soon, did you?" he

The girl's eyes dropped before his, then widened in dismay. "I had quite ber, be forgotten." she exclaimed. "All this heart. time Aunt Belinda is waiting in the "You might at least ask permission," building below. I was anxious to visit breathed Molle, rosily happy, but Billie the tower, and she feared to come so Van shook his head. high. I shall have to go down,"

The little old lady who awaited the phantly. "The very first night we met coming of her niece was very like a von held me tight, like this."

away \$6,000 in the next nine weeks, child have gone to Webster Springs.

threw back her head with a gesture "I have been anxious," she told her

The little old lady examined the card, peering over her spectacles with a perplexed frown.

that, I can't bear it." Billie managed of music. May I be permitted to berome-a pupil?"

"We shall be very glad, I am sure," she replied, subdued engerness in her tone. "Mollie, my dear, arrange with the gentleman for lessons." But the blue eyed girl, whose name was Mollie, glanced her surprise and disapproval.

"I have only been taking young pu-pils, nunt," she said, "and would not feel capable of teaching an-adult! "Very sorry," Billie answered resign

edly. "I had boped that this new study might prove a diversion from thoughts which harass and trouble." "Oh, if that is your reason"- the girl said in quick compunction.

"It is," Billie earnestly assured her

So the matter was settled. It was a shabby and small apartment where Billie Van entered upon a course of musical study, and so dull a pupi did be prove that his young teacher might have been discouraged in her efforts had it not been for a noble determination to keep this young man distracted from his reckless purpose.

They grew to speak of him at the cinb as the "dear departed." Indeed, the young man lived only in that one enchanted hour when, seated before the plano, he watched Mollie's slender fingers as they pressed the yellowed keys. And as Billie watched he was always remembering a high tower at twilight, small hands clasped close upon his breast. But when Billie would have referred to that thrilling moment. when his heart would have cried out to the girl in new found love and longing. Mollie would silence him with a look.

"Aunt." said Mollie one day, "answer me very seriously. Ought a girl to marry a man who had almost been guil ty of suicide? Could a girl love a man who had known that morbid desire?"

"Mollie." Aunt Belinda exclaimed horrided, "what put such a dreadful thought into your bend? Of course she could not, dear. Marriage with so sinful a man would be-impossible." Mollie sprang to her feet with a cry

"I hate New York," she said. "Thate the people. Let us go back to the country, aunt, where we usly be at peace." Then, turning, Mollie saw Bille Van standing in the doorway.

"I knocked," said! Biffle, "but you did not hear. May t come in?" Glancing at the two troubled faces Aunt Belinda quietly withdrew.

"I heard what you said." Billie went "I could not belp it, Mollie, and -and I've been a cur all along: that's true. But one risks much for love. Billie's voice broke, "Oh, my dear, my dear," he said tenderly, "I have loved you-loved you so from the momentlooked into your eyes,"

Mollie caught her brenth. "I love

you, Billie," she said bravely. "It seemed to be inevitable. But there is no use or hope in our love, for there are things which never can be explained away.'

"There is nothing which I cannot ex plain," Billie answered gently, "if you will give me this one chance." Silently she beckoned him to a seat at her side.

"The girl in the tower that night," Billie said slowly, "was my sister. She was left in my charge, as was also our small joint legacy. I have tried to do my duty to my orphaned sister, but Relle has been extravagant far beyoud our means. Of late her insatia ble desire for luxury would have led her into marriage with an old and wealthy man whose name I cannot even mention with calmness. To keep her from sorrow which only such a marriage could bring I desperately decided to risk our little all in the hope of satisfying her ambition. Peo ple have grown wealthy in a nigh through fortunate investment. This I told myself. There was a poor young devil who loved my sister as a woman deserves to be loved, so I sought to hold her for his sake. The Wall street deal seemed a very sure thing. though the problem bad vexed me for That is why I put it up to Belle that night in the tower. And you remember, Mollie, this was the Jeap in the ambiltion, teaching music, has faded dark to which I referred. This is the true meaning of those foolish words which moved your heart to save, Love has conquered in Belle's case, as love should always conquer, dear. And the sin I ask you to forgive is only the sin of a lover's deceiving. Could I let you mass out of my life forever? Oh. I was desperate, Monte, when I held latest offering has been the small say. You by your very sympathy." Billie arose and went over to the piano.

"Can you also forgive me this?" be musical studie which we intended to asked. And presently the room was filled with the silvery strains of the "Moonlight Sonnta." touch this, which set the keys vibrating with hidden melody. And when the last note died away Mollie came But Billie Van smiled his sinister swiftly to rest her hands upon the mu-

> "Dear," she said-"dear, that was the moonlight of the tower.' In an instant Billie's arms were about

ber; holding her against his tumultuous

Usually a very moderate amount Mrs. William B. Ehrenberg and of perseverance in want advertising in the Telegram for a job is suffici-

"You didn't," he answered trium-

ANDREW JOHNSON.

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of his own clothes. He was so scrupulous about his linen that he invariably changed all of it daily and sometimes oftener.

broad shoulders, fine forehead, superb old southern dance rendered this face, dark bushy hair and small hands number which was a scream from and feet. The most marked feature start to finish. about him was his eyes, which were small, and, although such eyes are not

cause in his youth he lacked the opportunity and always afterward would domino from another and was never at sented so ably. a horse race. He had been to a few circuses and minstrel shows and liked Major Truman, in Century.

M. de S., art critic, is traveling in Italy. On the train he consults the anuual showing various locations in Florence. He reads, "Casanumerovia-1 plano." "Oh, me," he says, "I do not want any piano in the house.' He continues to read. He finds houses of two, three, four pianos. He does not find any that are unprovided with these. He is desperate. He declares the superabundance of these instruments disgusts him with Florence

Then some one explains to him that the word plane, in Italian, signifies the floor or story of a house.-Cri de Paris,

Had a Complaint. The angry citizen puffed into the

office of the city editor. "See here, sir," he yelled, "what do you mean by publishing my resignation from my political office in this way?" "You gave the story out yourself,

didn't you?" asked the editor. "Of course I did," repled the angry citizen. "But your fool paper prints it under the head of Public Improvements."-Cincinnati Enquirer.

A Forlorn Hope,

Mandy-What foh yo' been goin' to de postoffice so reg'lar? Are yo' correspondin' wif some other female? Rastus-Nope, but since Ah been a-readin' in de papers 'bout dese "conscience funds" Ah kind o' thought Ah might possibly git a lettah from dat ministah what married us.-Life.

## **CLEVER**

(Continued from page 9.)

The first part outside of the opening and closing choruses was complete with nine songs rendered in a capable way among which are especially mentioned "The Land of My Room 319 Iwn (Romance," by Miss Laura Thompson; "Lead Me to that Beautiful Band" by John Kane: "Just a Little Smile," by Glen Norman, and "When that Midnight Choo Choo Leaves for Alabam," by Ralph Sta-

Many catchy and interesting jokes were delivered during the first part many with a local coloring, the ends being successfully taken care of by Messrs. John Kane, Marmacuke Wells, Ralph Stager and James Smith. The interloctuor of the evening, E. J. Francois, acquitted numself with the honors he deserved for the occasion and conducted himself

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in his role like a professional.

The olio contained many specialties, among which was one by little manma \$51-2 % of utter contempt.

Billie Van stood, staring dumbly, pened. Then she looked inquiringly est men in his dress and person I have appliance of the evening was given babby, Marie McCloskey, introducing several catchy songs and the greatest Room 208 ever known. During his three years this little tot when she sang "The Hound Song:"

walstcoat and black doeskin trousers and wore a silk hat. This had been Misses Stager and Thompson, was liner 644 of that time, whether as governor of Glide" by William Shinn and Miss Tennessee, member of congress or Gratia Carney and also the 'I Don't hooms 201-202 Second Flor United States senator, he had made all Believe You" song and dance by Miss Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., EVere Carney and John Kane.

The introduction of an old time Virgin'a reel was the decided hit of He was matchlessly perfect in figure, the second part. Eight couples made about five feet ten, had handsome up characteristic of members of an

The performance closed with the usually attractive, his were black, sparkling and absolutely beautiful. | presenting of "Goodnight Mr. | Moon" by Misses Stager and Thomp-He was not a gamester at anything son and Messrs. Kane and Wells, and could play only indifferently at abdy asisted by the entire company. checkers. In 1862 he explained to me The scenic effects of the closing that he had never visited a theater be number and the work of the chorus were good and brought to a close a rather study and work or go to bed minstrel which was a success in evthan spend his time at a playhouse ery particular and one that the lo-He looked on all kinds of gambling as cal lodge of Knights of Columbus wrong, never knew one card or one should feel proud of having pre-

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